

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN JO 04774 170001Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SEC-01 JUSE-00 IO-10 /064 W

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P R 162330Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8853

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: PRO-DECENCY COMMITTEE ANSWERS PROSIDENT ODUBER

1. ON SATURDAY (DECEMBER 14) THE PRO-DECENCY COMMITTEE RESPONDED PUBLICLY TO PRESIDENT ODUBER'S SPEECH OF DECEMBER 7, ITSELF A RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE'S FIRST CALL FOR VESCO'S EXPULSION. THE COMMITTEE STRESSED 12 CRITICISMS POINTING OUT INCONSISTENCIES IN ODUBER'S DEFENSE OF VESCO: (1) THAT THE PRESIDENT DEPRECATED AS POLITICAL TOOLS ALL THE SUPPORTERS OF THE COMMITTEE'S CAMPAIGN; (2) THAT ODUBER TALKED OF EXTRADITION WHILE THE COMMITTEE HAD CALLED FOR EXPULSION; (3) THAT ODUBER REFERRED TO USG INTERESTS AND U.S./COSTA RICAN RELATIONS INSTEAD OF THE DEMANDS OF THE COSTA RICAN PEOPLE; (4) THAT ODUBER ALLUDED TO UNREVEALED FACTORS WHICH SUGGEST HIDDEN PRESSURES THAT PREVENT HIM FROM ACTING AS A PATRIOTIC CITIZEN; (5) THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS THE POWER TO CONTROL ACTIVITIES OF IMMIGRANTS TO PROTECT THE WELL-BEING OF THE NATION; (6) THAT WHILE CLAIMING HE CANNOT "JUDGE" ANYONE, ODUBER PROCEEDED TO JUDGE THE MOTIVES OF THE

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PAGE 02 SAN JO 04774 170001Z

PRO-DECENCY COMMITTEE; (7) THAT WHILE DECLARING THAT

VESCO HAS NO SPECIAL PRIVILEGES IN COSTA RICA, ODUBER THEN CLAIMED HE HAS PERSONALLY ADVISED VESCO ON HIS INVESTMENTS; (3) THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS DENIED COSTA RICANS THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NATION'S DECISIONS; (9) THAT ODUBER DID NOT AVAIL HIMSELF OF THIS CITIZENS' SUPPORT IN ELIMINATING CORRUPTION, AS HE PLEDGED LAST MAY; (19) THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS LET THE LAWS OF THE COUNTRY BECOME DISCREDITED TO ALLOW VESCO TO REMAIN; (11) THAT ODUBER HAS TRIED TO SILENCE A LEGITIMATE COMPLAINT OF THE PEOPLE; AND 12) THAT THE CAUSE OF THIS NATIONAL SCANDAL IS NOT THE PRO-DECENCY COMMITTEE BUT VESCO HIMSELF.

2. THE PRO-DECENCY COMMITTEE CLOSED ITS STATEMENT BY PROTESTING THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AS "EVASIVE, CONTRADICTIONARY, AND OFFENSIVE", BY CALLING ONCE AGAIN FOR VESCO'S EXPULSION, AND BY PROMISING TO CONTINUE ITS CAMPAIGN WITH VIGOR.

3. MEANWHILE, OVER THE WEEKEND THE PRESS CAMPAIGN FOR ROBERT VESCO'S EXPULSION CONTINUED. A MAJOR CAUSE FOR THE RENEWED ATTACKS WAS THE ADMISSION BY DEPUTY SIGURD KOBERG (UNIFICACION NACIONAL) THAT HE SERVED AS A EMISSARY FOR VESCO TO OFFER CAMPAIGN MONEY TO THEN UN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FERNANDO TREJOS ESCALANTE. STRONG EDITORIAL COMMENTS IN "LA NACION" ON SUNDAY (DECEMBER 15) AND IN "LA REPUBLICA" TODAY (DECEMBER 16) STRESSED THE THEME THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER NOW HAS THE PROOF HE CLAIMED HE NEEDED TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST VESCO. "LA NACION" STATED THAT VESCO IS "INSTALLED IN THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE OF A POWERFUL SECTOR OF THE PLN" AND THEREFORE HE HAS BECOME A POLITICAL PROBLEM THAT ODUBER WAS INCAPABLE OF SOLVING. HOWEVER, THE EDITORIAL CONTINUED, THE KOBERG INCIDENT IS PROOF THAT VESCO IS "UP TO HIS NECK" IN THE POLITICS OF COSTA RICA AND ODUBER CAN NO LONGER EVADE THE PROBLEM. IN EVEN HARSHER WORDS, "LA REPUBLICA" CLAIMED THAT IF ODUBER DOES NOT ACT THEN THE BLACKMAIL REFERRED TO BY VESCO IN HIS DEFENSE SPEECH MUST BE THE REASON. IN A SEPARATE COLUMN OF THE SAME NEWSPAPER, VESCO WAS DESCRIBED AS THE "PROTEGE" OF THE PRESIDENT.

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## Message Attributes

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